

REMARKS

In response to the Decision on Appeal dated October 29, 2003, claims 1, 4, 21, 24-25, 28, 45, 48, 50, 65 and 67 have been cancelled, and claims 2-3, 5-9, 12-14, 16-20, 22, 26-27, 29, 33, 36-38, 40-42, 44, 46, 49, 51-53, 59, 61-62, 66 and 68-81 have been amended. Claims 2-3, 5-20, 22-23, 26-27, 29-44, 46-47, 49, 51-64, 66 and 68-81 remain in the application. Allowance of the application, as amended, is requested.

In the decision by the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences dated October 29, 2003, the following rejections were upheld:

- Claims 1, 4, 21, 25, 28, 45, 48-51, and 65-68 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Venolia, U.S. Patent No. 5,463,722 (Venolia).
- Claims 14-15 and 38-39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Venolia, U.S. Patent No. 5,463,722 (Venolia) and Eckart, U.S. Patent No. 5,408,606 (Eckart).
- Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Venolia, U.S. Patent No. 5,463,722 (Venolia) and Rostoker, U.S. Patent No. 5,623,418 (Rostoker).

However, claims 2-3, 5-13, 16-20, 22-34, 26-27, 29-44, 46-47, 52-64, and 69-81 had been indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the base claim and any intervening claims. The amendments herein cancel the rejected claims and rewrite the claims indicated as being allowable into independent form.

Record is made of a telephone interview between Examiner Sealey and the below-signed attorney that occurred on November 10, 2003. Applicants' attorney noted that the decision sustained the prior art rejections and requested guidance on handling the claims that were indicated as being allowable by the Examiner prior to the appeal. Examiner Sealey stated that Applicants' attorney should now submit an amendment recasting the allowable claims into an allowable form. This amendment is being submitted in response to that telephone interview.

Record is made of a telephone interview between Examiner Sealey and the below-signed attorney that occurred on February 9, 2004. Examiner Sealey pointed out some errors in the formatting of the previous Amendment, and asked that the Amendment be resubmitted.

Record is made of a telephone interview between Examiner Sealey and the below-signed attorney that occurred on February 25, 2004. Examiner Sealey pointed out additional errors in the formatting of the previous Amendment, and asked that the Amendment be resubmitted.

Record is made of a telephone interview between Special Programs Review Examiner (SPRE) Bost and the below-signed attorney that occurred on March 3, 2004. SPRE Bost further explained how the claims should be amended.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is now in good order for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited.

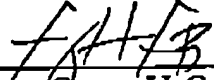
Should the Examiner believe minor matters still remain that can be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is urged to call Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

GATES & COOPER LLP
Attorneys for Applicant

Howard Hughes Center
6701 Center Drive West, Suite 1050
Los Angeles, California 90045
(310) 641-8797

Date: March 4, 2004

By: 
Name: George H. Gates
Reg. No.: 33,500

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